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App. Serial No.: 10/044,398
Atty. Docket No.: 0026-011

REMARKS

These remarks are in response to the Final Office Action dated January 10, 2005, which has a shortened statutory period for response set to expire April 10, 2005. No extension of time is required.

Claims

Claims 1-12 and 22-46 are pending in the above-identified application. Claims 1-12, 22-31, and 39 are rejected over prior art. Claims 1, 11, 22, 33, 35, 37-38, 41, 43, and 45-46 are amended, and Claims 13-21, 32 and 40 are canceled. Claims 2-10, 12, 23-31, 34, 36, 39, 42, and 44 remain as filed or as previously amended. Based on the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter and the amendments made herein, this case should now be in condition for allowance.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner indicates that Claims 32-38 and 40-46 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and § 103

Claims 1-6, 9-11, 22-25, 29, 31, and 39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by Proudman (USPN 5,246,026). In addition, Claims 7, 8, 12, 26-28, and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Proudman.

Claim 32 depends directly from Claim 1 and is indicated by the Examiner to include allowable subject matter. Claim 1 is amended herein to include all the limitations of indicated allowable Claim 32, and Claim 32 is canceled. Therefore, amended Claim 1 should now be allowable over the cited prior art. Claims 2-12 and 31 depend either directly or indirectly from Claim 1 and are therefore also distinguished from the cited prior art.

Claim 40 depends directly from Claim 22 and is indicated by the Examiner to include allowable subject matter. Claim 22 is amended herein to include the limitations of indicated allowable Claim 40, and Claim 40 is canceled. Therefore, amended Claim 22 should now be

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allowable. Claims 23-30 and 39 depend either directly or indirectly from Claim 22 and are therefore also distinguished from the cited prior art.

Please note that the amendments made herein are intended to obviate the rejections of Claims 1-12, 22-31, and 39 in order to expedite the allowance of the present application. Applicant makes no admission with respect to the propriety of the rejections. Indeed, Applicant believes that original Claims 1-12, 22-31, and 39 contain inventive subject matter in their own right at least for the reasons presented in the Response filed November 22, 2004.

For the above reasons Applicant requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and §103.

Additional Amendments

Claim 11 is amended herein to include the word "a," which was inadvertently omitted from Claim 11 when Claim 11 was filed.

Claims 33, 35, 37, and 38 are amended herein to depend from Claim 1, which now includes the limitations of Claim 32.

Similarly, Claims 41, 43, 45, and 46 are amended herein to depend from Claim 22, which now includes the limitations of Claim 40.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant believes that Claims 1-12, 22-31, 33-39, and 41-46 are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner undertake any action other than allowance of Claims 1-12, 22-31, 33-39, and 41-46, or if the Examiner has any questions or suggestions for expediting the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's attorney at (269) 279-8820.

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Respectfully submitted,

Date: 3/9/05

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Date: 3/9/05

Larry E. Henneman, Jr.
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